

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 STATE 029869
ORIGIN OPIC-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 /025 R

DRAFTED BY OPIC/F JDBANKS
APPROVED BY EB/IFD/ OIA:MPBOERNER
EB/IFD/OIA:DVGRANT
AF/C:R I MARCUS (SUBST)

-----043447 040314Z /64

P 040225Z PEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE PRIORITY
INFO AMCONSUL DOUALA PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 029869

FROM OPIC

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EFIN

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL CASTLE AND COOKE PROJECT

1. IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH CASTLE AND COOKE, OPIC
LEARNED FOLLOWING STATUS OF DEVELOPMENTS. COMPANY SERI-
OUSLY INTERESTED IN DOING LARGE-SCALE BANANA PROJECT IN
CAMEROON FOR EXPORT TO EUROPEAN MARKETS. AFTER JULY-AUGUST
1977 VISIT BY REPS, COMPANY INFORMED ED NOMO BY LETTER
THAT STUDY OF SOIL TESTS AND OTHER REPORTS ENCOURAGE FURTHER
CONSIDERATION OF COUNTRY FOR PROJECT.

2. IMMEDIATE PROBLEM IS IDENTIFYING SUFFICIENT GOOD QUAL-
ITY LAND. PROJECT REQUIRES ABOUT 7,000 ACRES TO BE OF
INTEREST TO COMPANY. IF LAND NOT CONTIGUOUS, PLOTS NOT LESS
THAN 100 ACRES EACH SHOULD BE NO FARTHER THAN 100 KILOM-
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 STATE 029869

ETERS APART. ACREAGE TESTED BY COMPANY REPS LAST YEAR AND
FOUND SUITABLE FOR PROJECT IS LESS THAN AMOUNT REQUIRED.
IN OTHER AREAS OFFERED FOR INSPECTION LAST YEAR BY GURC,
COMPANY REPS WERE PREVENTED FROM CONDUCTING SOIL TESTS
BECAUSE OF THICK GROUND COVER OR DIRT TRACKS IMPASSABLE BY
MOTOR VEHICLE.

3. FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONSULTANT TO COMPANY WILLIAM HUSSEY (FSO RETIRED) RETURNING TO CAMEROON LATE FEBRUARY TO TRY GET GURC ASSISTANCE FOR COMPANY SOIL EXPERT ARRIVING LATER IN MONTH. SOIL EXPERT MARCO PINEDA WILL CONDUCT SOIL TESTS IN INACCESSIBLE AREAS OR ON OTHER ACREAGE IDENTIFIED BY HUSSEY AND GURC AS POSSIBLE PROJECT SITES. HUSSEY ARRIVING FEBRUARY 20 AND PINEDA FEBRUARY 25.

4. INACCESSIBLE LAND, IN ORDER OF PRIORITY SUGGESTED BY NJONTIE PIERRE, ON WHICH SOIL TESTS NEEDED, IS LOCATED (1) AT KOMBE SOUTHEAST OF BONADAM (5-600 HA.), (2) SOUTH-WEST OF NICE (600 HA.), AND (3) AT LOUM CHANTIERS SOUTH-WEST OF LOUM (LESS THAN 600 HA.). HUSSEY WILL TRY GET (1) GURC AGREEMENT TO SEND LABORERS WITH MACHETES CUT THREE OR FOUR FOOT STRAIGHT LINE CRUDE PATH ACROSS ACREAGE DRIVING WOODEN PEG EVERY 100 METERS TO ALLOW SOIL SAMPLING BY COMPANY SOIL EXPERT; (2) IDEA OF WHETHER GOVERNMENT WILL BE WILLING TO ALLOCATE ADDITIONAL PLANTING AREAS IN THESE LOCATIONS TO PROJECT (UP TO 7,000 ACRES REQUIRED), IF SOIL TEST RESULTS FAVORABLE; AND (3) COPY FRENCH TECHNICAL STUDY MADE ON ENTIRE REGION DESCRIBED ABOVE PUBLISHED SOMETIME 1970-76. COMPANY REALIZES THAT MANY PLANTING AREAS MENTIONED THIS CABLE ALREADY PLANTED IN OTHER CROPS AND IT THEREFORE WILL BE ASKING GURC IF REPLANTING IN BANANA CASH CROP THERE OF HIGHER ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO COUNTRY.
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 STATE 029869

5. WHILE COMPANY PREPARED LOOK AT SITES MENTIONED ABOVE OR OTHER ALTERNATES THAT MAY BE SUGGESTED BY GURC, ITS INFORMATION IS THAT BEST BANANA AREAS FROM STANDPOINT SOILS, CLIMATE AND TRANSPORTATION IS AREA SOUTH, SOUTH-WEST MBANGA CENTERED AROUND EKONA WHICH IT UNDERSTANDS UNDER CDC CONTROL. DURING COMPANY REPS' VISIT LAST YEAR THOUGH THEY DID NOT MEET WITH CDC, REPS GAINED IMPRESSION OF RIVALRY AND COMPETITION BETWEEN CDC AND CAMEROON BANANA ORGANIZATION (OCB). IF POSSIBLE WITHOUT UPSETTING GURC OR OCB, HUSSEY REQUESTS EMBASSY DISCRETELY INQUIRE IF CDC INTERESTED IN INCREASING BANANA PRODUCTION IN EKONA REGION AND IF SO, IF SOIL SURVEY AVAILABLE FOR STUDY. IF NONE AVAILABLE, WILL CDC PERMIT COMPANY SOIL EXPERT TO MAKE SURVEY OF CDC LAND.

6. AFTER SUFFICIENT LAND IDENTIFIED, TESTED AND FOUND SUITABLE FOR PROJECT, COMPANY NEXT STEP TO SEND ANOTHER TEAM OVER ASSESS INFRASTRUCTURE (ROADS, PORT FACILITIES, ETC.), DISCUSS INVESTMENT INCENTIVES AND IF SATISFIED PRESENT FIRM PROPOSAL TO GURC. WHILE COMPANY SERIOUSLY

INTERESTED IN CAMEROON, IT EXTREMELY CAREFUL DUE EARLIER

DOLE EXPERIENCE NOT TO COMMIT ITSELF UNTIL IT CONVINCED
ALL NECESSARY FACTORS FOR SUCCESSFUL PROJECT ARE PRESENT.

7. AS POTENTIAL LARGE-SCALE U.S. INVESTMENT, OPIC VERY
INTERESTED SEEING PROJECT GO FORWARD. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS
ESTIMATED AT 50-70 MILLION DOLLARS, PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT
FOR ABOUT 1000 WORKERS. SINCE DEVELOPING AGRICULTURE
SECTOR A HIGH GURC PRIORITY ALONG WITH ATTRACTING U.S.
INVESTMENT, OPIC HOPES GURC WILL COOPERATE AS MUCH AS
POSSIBLE WITH COMPANY IN DEVELOPING PROJECT.

8. IN ADDITION HUSSEY REQUEST PARA 5, REQUEST EMBASSY
BRIEF ED NOMO ON SUBSTANCE THIS MESSAGE AND REPORT ANY
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 STATE 029869

INDICATION OF GURC INTEREST IN PROCEEDING FURTHER WITH
PROJECT. VANCE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FRUIT, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE029869
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: F JDBANKS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780053-0176
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197802113/aaaafocz.tel
Line Count: 143
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON MICROFILM, TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: d35f9cce-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN OPIC
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3462235
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 970826
Subject: POTENTIAL CASTLE AND COOKE PROJECT
TAGS: EFIN, EPAP, EPAP
To: YAOUNDE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d35f9cce-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014